

numbers in a minute. We are not talking about a few people being hurt. We are talking about a catastrophe. We are talking about farmland. We are talking about the State's water supply. About two-thirds of the water supply in the State comes from that northern area.

When my friend started, he was very nice and said he doesn't doubt the fact that the Sacramento levees are a problem, and that San Francisco has been having problems. I wrote down what he said. He said: San Francisco and the area south of there. This is the area north of San Francisco. This is Sacramento. I don't think my friend really, with all due respect, gets the intricacies of what we are dealing with here. There is a difference between north of San Francisco and south because north of San Francisco is where we have delta—again, two-thirds of the water supply of our State—the farmland and all the rest. South of San Francisco, we have Silicon Valley. That has other issues. But right now, we are talking about the Sacramento area, which is north.

The Governor goes on to talk about the economic disruption. Because we are such a large State, people say when California sneezes, the country gets a cold. It is an expression that speaks to the power of our State in terms of economic productivity. And in terms of the goods coming across into the ports of California and going all across into your State and everybody else's—this region is the bread basket. So we ask you to back off this amendment.

This is so not a partisan issue. The Governor writes:

As you know, Senators Feinstein and Boxer have worked closely with Chairmen Cochran and Domenici to include funds in the pending supplemental . . . for certain levee and flood control improvements . . .

I support these funds and want to assure you that this is a necessary and urgent time for Congress to act.

The Governor came here. He met with Senator DOMENICI and many Senators. He said:

. . . any investment at this time decreases the chances that Congress will have to respond in the future with another far more expensive emergency funding bill to address a widespread flood disaster in California.

I ask that you recognize this as a necessary emergency funding bill. Support this.

I want to show a picture. Senator FEINSTEIN showed us a version of this. They all tell a story better than I could. Here you have the Sacramento River. Here you have thousands and thousands of people. Here you have the levees, and here you have the riverbed. And what has happened, if my friend would like to take a look at this—I know he doesn't question that we need a project; he questions whether it belongs in this bill. I understand.

Mr. COBURN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mrs. BOXER. Yes.

Mr. COBURN. I question how we are paying for it. We are borrowing the

money from future generations to do it rather than make the hard decisions of trimming something else. That is important.

Mrs. BOXER. That is what I just said. I said the Senator doesn't oppose us doing this. He doesn't want it in this bill. That is my understanding of his position. I couldn't disagree with you more. When my friend quoted me and I said Iraq should have been in the budget, that is exactly how I feel, because we knew about it. Frankly, we didn't know about this, that we were going to have the kind of events we have had, the rain and the rain and the rain. I will go into the details of how much rain we have had compared to other years and the fact that anything can happen now.

The weather patterns are changing. When I lived in the bay area in California so many years ago, it is too long to remember, when I first came here in the 1960s, you never had rain in March, let alone April. It was dry. It was dry really from mid-February on. It has been moving forward, and we have March as one of the rainiest months and then April. We had a month this year—April—where we had rain almost every day. It is unheard of. You can see how muddy this is. You can see the breaks here in the riverbank.

I will show you another picture on the other side where there is not as much development but the same thing has occurred. These trees were on the other side of the riverbank. Look at these trees. They are now buried in the water. So if we don't go ahead with the Corps now, when the Corps tells us we need to do this now, we are going to lose this riverbank. We are going to lose the levees. And then it is too late.

My friend says he wants to save money. It reminds me of the old adage of penny wise and pound foolish. It is a colloquialism, but the fact is, you have to prevent things. This is an emergency circumstance, as the Governor said. These levees could break. Now we have a snowmelt. That snowmelt occurs, that water gets deeper, the pressure in that river increases, and the riverbank begins to disappear, leaving those levees exposed.

I wish to refer to a document put together by the Chamber of Commerce in Sacramento. It reads, "Sacramento: A Region at Risk." Cities and counties don't like to say, especially chambers of commerce, we are at risk. They don't like to say that because they want to have investment. They want people to come in. They don't go about saying: We are in danger. And when a chamber of commerce goes out and says: We are in danger—and these are Republicans mostly, and these are as conservative as my friend from Oklahoma; they know that an investment is not wasteful spending if, in fact, we are going to save money at the end of the day. How much would we have saved if we had built stronger, better levees in Louisiana? Untold, probably billions. I don't think my friend is at all a fiscal

conservative by taking away \$11 million. It is reckless. I hope and pray that my colleagues are listening to this debate and are looking at these pictures and understanding what we are talking about.

The Sacramento area faces a triple flood threat, and it faces it now. We have a confluence of two major rivers, the threat of a deteriorating flood control system, and the threat of near record precipitation this year. We are talking about 165,000 homes, nearly 500,000 residents, the State capital, and many businesses providing 200,000 jobs. It is also the hub of the six-county regional economy, providing hundreds of thousands of jobs. A major flood along the lower Sacramento or American Rivers would cripple the region's economy. I will go into that tomorrow because Senator FEINSTEIN and I each have 15 minutes in the morning. I will save some of my talk for then.

California has the world's fifth largest economy, and we are quibbling over \$11 million that the Corps says it needs to fix up these riverbanks. How outrageous, how shortsighted, how foolish. I don't understand why my friend is doing this. We talked. He feels deeply about it. I respect that. I voted with him a couple of times. I have been very careful, picking and choosing, sticking with the committee when I felt the committee was right, joining my friend. But I don't understand this one. This one is inexplicable.

The average family understands that if they have a problem with their roof, they fix it. They don't put it off. They fix it so that their home is not destroyed. It is straightforward.

Let's look at the pocket again. They call this the pocket of Sacramento; 112,000 people are at risk, and you can see clearly where this riverbank has deteriorated. On New Year's Day, Californians in the northern and central parts of our State awoke to flooding that cost the State \$200 million. We are talking about \$11 million so we can mitigate what comes next. But precipitation after January 1 has kept river levels very high, further stressing and eroding our critical flood control infrastructure.

Precipitation, including snow pack, as the snows melt, is nearly twice the normal amount, 174 percent of normal, and that is just as of last week. And the snows are just now starting to melt.

We have another threat to this area. My colleague, Senator FEINSTEIN, said it beautifully: How would we feel if we did something on this Senate floor today that turned our backs on this issue and then we had a tragedy?

We would not feel very good about it. So I am going to save the rest of my talk until tomorrow. But I am going to say to you, Mr. President, again thank you. It is very rare that we have such bipartisan cooperation in our State. This is not a Republican issue or a Democratic issue. We will have Republicans suffer if we have a problem and